Irasema Coronado, co-chair, Coalition Against Violence toward Women and Families at the Border (240 5826)

DISCUSSION and Action.
The Coalition asks the Mayor and Council members for (1) reaffirmation of their Proclamation denouncing violence against women, and (2) permanent removal of Mr. Cushing from all committees and decisions on law enforcement and women.

The Coalition against Violence toward Women & Families on the Border

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Contact: Irasema Coronado, Co-chair (240 5826)

April 7, 2005

NO WOMAN BEATERS ON CITY COUNCIL!

Violence against women is a serious problem in El Paso, Juarez, and the world. Until the 1980s and thereafter, U.S. police departments paid little attention to such violence, and Mexican police have virtually ignored violent crimes against women. Witness the murders of at least 370 women and girls in Ciudad Juarez over the last ten years.

Thankfully, things have changed, and U.S. police no longer tolerate violence against women. Police departments investigate cases with professionalism and vigor and bring criminal charges against perpetrators.

Violence against women produces tragic costs: to the victims/survivors, to law enforcement, to children who witness and sometimes reproduce the violence, and to employers, with days lost from injury. In El Paso, Police Officer Barcena lost his life during response to a domestic violence call.

It now seems probable that a man with a history of violence against women is on the El Paso City Council. In 1976 an El Paso court rendered default judgment against Robert A. Cushing, ordering him to compensate the plaintiff, a female victim, for injuries allegedly sustained at the hands of Cushing in a 1975 attack. The attack was described as "malicious" and the injuries represented in the following way:

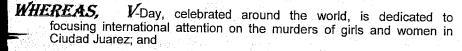
...The loss of teeth, injuries to head from having hair torn from scalp, injuries to head from being struck by the Defendants, cuts to the knees from being dragged along the pavement and injuries to the back from being kicked in the back."

(from District Court Case 75-3843, 5 pages of the forty-page assault case in http://www.newspapertree.com/view article.sstg?c=f65d2cf6a6164fa1)

The El Paso Times subsequently covered the story with two articles, but only one letter to the editor has been printed thus far, written by a J. Jarvis, who minimized the issue. There is also a Jerry Jarvis who is a member of El Paso's Ethics Review Board, appointed by District 8 council representative Anthony Cobos. If "J. Jarvis" and "Jerry Jarvis" of the Ethics Review Board are one-and-the-same, it seems El Pasoans would have little recourse filing complaints to a compromised and tainted board.

If Cushing's acts are as alleged in the complaint filed in 1975, El Paso would be disgraced with his presence on its council. Twice, the City Council affirmed its concern about violence against women at the border, both under the Wardy and Caballero administrations, as has the Texas and New Mexico legislatures. Representatives should act on their commitment to reduce violence against women. Regardless of how the facts prove in Mr. Cushing's case, woman beaters have no place on the El Paso City Council.

Proclamation City of El Paso, Texas



WHEREAS, Over 300 girls and women have been murdered in Juarez over the last 10 years, one third of them raped and mutilated before death, and several of them El Pasoans; and

WHEREAS, Interpersonal and street violence is problematic in Juarez for both men and women, with the most recent example being backyard burials in early 2004; and

WHEREAS, Disappearances of people are also problematic in Juarez, affecting El Pasoans, their relatives and friends; and

WHEREAS, Worldwide, women face special safety threats in their homes and on the streets, whether from domestic violence, rape, and/or serial killers, with an average of 2,400 domestic violence calls per month reported to the police in El Paso.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Mayor and Council February 14, 2004 shall be known as:

"VDAY, ANTI-VIOLENCE DAY"

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the El Paso City Council supports Bi-national cooperation to call attention to the problems and encourages work towards Bi-national solutions including recognition of human rights.

In Witness Whereof. I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of El Pass to be affixed this _____ day of ____ February_.

A.D.. 20_04

Mayor Joe Wardy